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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Chairman, Ad hoc Requirements Committee

DATE: 18 February 1957

FROM : Talent Control Officer, ORR

TCS-682-57 *cy.1*

SUBJECT: Justification of Soviet Heavy Bomber Production Facilities as Highest Priority Targets

1. Soviet intentions regarding the development of a full intercontinental strike capability in their Long Range Air Army cannot be assessed from presently available intelligence information. Since the long-range intercontinental strike capability of the USSR is probably the most important determinant of the emphasis placed upon the US heavy bomber and interceptor programs, intelligence estimates of the Soviet program seriously affect the US economy and the defense establishment. Based upon recent evidence that BISON production has been considerably lower than previously estimated, the US B-52 production program is to be reduced significantly. If firm evidence were available to demonstrate that the intelligence community has over-estimated Soviet intentions and capabilities in the production of heavy bombers, a further reduction in the US defense budget for long range aircraft might be possible. Conversely if US intelligence has under-estimated Soviet intentions and capabilities to produce heavy bombers, an increase in the US budget for long range aircraft would be indicated.

2. From the point of view of national defense, a reliable estimate of Soviet Long Range Air Army strength and Soviet intentions to supplement this strength will preclude the possibility of an all-out surprise attack. Conceivably the USSR may be bypassing a large heavy bomber program in favor of an ICBM missile program. If such is the case, and provided the USSR has not made a technological breakthrough in the guided missile-nuclear energy fields, the threat of an all-out attack in the next few years would be reduced.

3. An estimate of present Soviet heavy bomber strength and future intentions concerning the program can best be made by determining the present strength of Soviet Long Range Air Army units, the quantity of heavy bombers in the pipeline, the number and size of airframe assembly plants possibly involved in production, and the rates of production at each plant. Photography of the following targets would supply the necessary information to permit an accurate assessment of the production program:

A a. Kuybyshev, Factory No. 18 and Factory No. 1.

Factory No. 18 is the only known producer of the BEAR turbo-prop heavy bomber. Although production has been definitely established, information concerning the rate of production is not firm. Accurate knowledge of plant size would definitely establish the potential for BEAR production and a count of the number of BEAR aircraft on the ramp or ramps contiguous to the plant would indicate present production rates.

Factory No. 1, a producer of the BADGER twin-jet medium bomber since 1954, can be expected to begin production of a new model shortly. This plant would be a likely choice for production of heavy bombers due to its location, layout, and size. Identification of the type and number of aircraft seen outside the plant would serve as an excellent indication of the present type and rate of production. In addition firm knowledge of the size of this plant would definitely establish its potential for bomber production.

B b. Kazan, Factory No. 22.

Factory No. 22 in Kazan has produced the BADGER twin-jet medium bomber since 1953. Recently there has been reason to believe that the plant may be phasing out of BADGER production. Owing to its large size, the plant is the most likely to be incorporated into the heavy bomber production program. Identification of the type and quantity of aircraft seen near the plant will serve as excellent indication of the present type of production and of a possible change in production. In addition, firm knowledge of the size of this plant will definitely establish its potential for bomber production.

C c. Moscow/Ramenskoye Airfield.

This is the most important aircraft development center in the USSR. The TsAGI Institute, the central aircraft development authority, is located adjacent to the airfield. It has been definitely established that BISON aircraft produced at Factory No. 23 in Moscow, about which complete details are known, are first flown to Ramenskoye Airfield for final production and testing operations before delivery to units. BEAR aircraft, apparently in some stage of test activity, have also been observed here.

D d. Irkutsk, Factory No. 39.

This plant is estimated to be one of the largest airframe assembly plants in the USSR. Although it has produced light bombers for many years, there is currently no indication that it is to enter into production of heavy or medium bomber aircraft. Observation of the plant would serve to establish its precise size, and, thus, its potential for heavy bomber production should the decision be made by the USSR to add this plant to the heavy bomber complex.

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